

18
The GLORIOUS DESIGN of a
Compassionate JESUS, in coming
into the World to Save Sinners :

145
Consider'd in a

SERMON

PREACH'D

At the FUNERAL

O F

Mr. John Brooksbank,
of Eland, Sept. 26, 1715.

By THOMAS DICKENSON.

Hebrews VII, xxv.

He is able to Save to the Uttermost, εἰς
τὸ παντελές, to perpetuity or perfection.

L O N D O N:

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To the R E A D E R.

That Man hath lost his Original Rectitude and Perfection, is a truth evident to the Light of Nature; but of the first Cause of this Depravation, the wisest Heathens were as ignorant, as how God shou'd be appeas'd, and become reconciled to sinful Mortals: And therefore from a Consciousness of their Guilt, and that they were obnoxious to his Judgment, they invented Various Rites to atone for their Offences, some of which were ridiculous and unworthy of God: Others very barbarous and unnatural, as the substituting of their Slaves to die for 'em, and in Cases of Extremity offering the first born of their Body for the Sin of their Souls.

But this important and perplexing Scruple is entirely removed by the Gospel, which brings Life and Immortality to Light, and presents us with a Sacrifice so pure and spotless, and of such infinite Value, as is perfectly satisfactory for the Sins of the World.

This Blessed and surprizing Discovery is so peculiar to the Gospel, that from thence it derives its Name, and is stiled, the Word of Grace, or the Grace of God bringing Salvation to all Men: This is that invaluable Blessing celebrated by the Angels at Christ's Birth, and with them we have all reason to join our Anthems of Praise, for this Plank that is cast out to us in the common Shipwreck of Humane Felicity, which alone can save us from irrecoverable Perdition.

After the Display of such marvellous and unmerited Grace to a lost World, one would reasonably think, that this good News should be received with the highest Transports of Joy, and that every one should press earnestly after a Share in this great Salvation; but alas, we may take up the same complaint at this Day, that our Saviour once did over the perverse Jews. Ye will not come unto me that ye might have Life.

This is matter of Wonder no less than of Lamentation, and is a convincing Instance of the wretched

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Degeneracy of Man by the Fall; but notwithstanding the Blindness and Obstinacy of Sinners, Ministers must not cease to persuade, and beseech 'em to be reconcil'd to God: For Christ's Institutions are under a Promise of the Divine Blessing, and tho' some may reject the Word, yet the Spirit of God will make it a Savour of Life unto others, and transform 'em thereby into his Image from Glory to Glory.

Of the Efficacy of this sovereign and special Grace, Mr. John Brooksbank was a real and lasting Instance. God touched his Heart in the Days of his Youth, which preserv'd him from the common Vices incident to that vain and unthinking Age; and his first Love suffer'd little or no Abatement thro' the succeeding Course of his Life.

He was deeply sensible, that Baptismal Regeneration is not sufficient to the Salvation of the Adult, without a solemn Recognition of that Covenant, and living answerably thereunto; and accordingly made it his constant Care to govern himself in the whole of his Behaviour by the Rule of the Gospel, and to keep a Conscience void of Offence towards God and All Men.

He had the Interest and Advancement of Religion as much at Heart as most I ever knew, and endeavour'd the furtherance of it both in himself and others; witness his Love to God's House, his Servants, and the Duties of his Worship; wherein he manifested an uncommon Reverence and Tenderness of Spirit, as the Judicious Author of the following Discourse very justly observes.

Nor was his Devotion confin'd to the Lord's Day alone, but was constantly maintain'd and kept up in his Family, wherein daily and fervent Prayers were put up for all that were under his Roof. His Children were train'd up with the utmost Care, in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord: Many Prayers were offer'd by himself, and others at his Instance, for them; many pious Instructions did he instill into their Minds in their tender Tears, all which he recommended to 'em in his own Practice. This gives good Ground of Hope, that a Blessing is reserv'd for 'em; and he has often reminded

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me of what Ambrose said to Monica concerning her Son Austin, whose Conversion she so much thirsted after, 'Tis impossible, (saith he) that a Child of so many Prayers should finally miscarry, and be lost for ever.

His Humility and Modesty was very obvious to the slightest Observer, for tho' God had blessed him with a plentiful Estate, he was not in the least puff'd up with it, nor ever discover'd any spice of Affectation or Vain-glory: He had nothing in him of an assuming Temper; but always study'd the things that make for Peace. His greatest Ambition (next to the preserving his Integrity) was to pass through the World without Noise or Observation, and to employ his Riches for the best Purposes, in Works of Piety and Mercy, and this he did in a Degree superior to most of his Rank and Station.

He was of a staid Mind and Temperate Passions; for tho' he kept up stated Communion with Protestant Dissenters, yet he had a cordial Love and Esteem for all pious and good Men, whether within the Pale of the Publick Establishment or without. He perfectly despis'd a furious Bigotry and blind Zeal in all Parties, and could never so far bribe his Understanding, as to think that either the Name of a Church-Man or Dissenter, would avail any thing to the Salvation of those of an Immoral Life.

By the Blessing of a hale Constitution and a strict Temperance, he enjoyed a firm and continued State of Health for many Years, but Nature at length giving way to the Infirmities of Age, he fell under a lingering Illness, which by fits returned on him with great Severity; but he bore his Pains with an exemplary Patience and Resignation to the Will of God, and left off his worldly Business, that he might more closely apply himself to the Thoughts of his approaching Change.

His Intervals of Ease were mostly taken up in reviewing his Evidence for Heaven, and the renewed Exercises of Repentance and Faith in the Mediator. He had the most self-abasing Reflections of a Penitent Sinner, but wanted not those Joys of Faith, which result from the believing

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lieving Prospect of a happy Immortality thro' the Merit and Righteousness of his blessed Redeemer. Thus he continu'd to wait for his Dissolution, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal Life.

By this time some Readers may perhaps lament with me, that many good Christians, who agree in the same Articles of Faith, and the same Substantials of Worship with the Established Church, should merely for their Dissent from such Rites and Ceremonies as have no Divine Sanction in Scripture, be put by some into the same Class with Heathens and Infidels; and left to God's uncovenanted Mercy, or in other Words, be cut off from Christ's Mystical Body, and consign'd over to a State of Damnation: For how any Man can be sav'd out of Christ by absolute Mercy, I understand not; since all the Benefits of Redemption come to us by him in a Covenant-Way.

But those who have well studied their Bibles, and have nothing in view but the Glory of God and the saving of their own Souls, will not be moved by such Unchristian Censures whilst the Sacred Oracles have irrefragably determin'd, that whosoever believeth shall be sav'd, and that in every Nation he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness is accepted of him.

It remains, to beg the Reader's Pardon for this long Preface to so short, but very valuable a Discourse. Love is a talkative Passion, and I could not forbear to indulge my Affection in paying this last Tribute to the Memory of so exemplary a Christian, and one of the best Friends I had in this World; and to comply with the Desire of his dear beloved Brother Mr. Joseph Brooksbank of London, betwixt whom there was an entire Affection, and at whose Desire this Sermon is made Publick; hoping it may be of some Use to those into whose Hands it shall fall. Help, Lord, for the Godly Man ceaseth, for the Faithful fail from among the Children of Men.



NATH. PRIESTLEY.

I TIMOTHY I. XV.

This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to Save Sinners ; of whom I am Chief.

IN the thirteenth Verse of this Chapter (the former Part) the great Apostle St. Paul declares what a Prodigious Sinner he had been before his Conversion. He represents himself as guilty of very heinous Impieties against God, a *Blasphemer* against the Saints, a *Persecutor* towards Mankind in general: *Injurious Sins!* These were of such an aggravated and accumulated Guilt, that they seem but to want one Ingredient (as some think) to render them the Sin against the Holy Ghost, to wit, sufficient Knowledge. But so rich and free is the Grace, so astonishing and transcendent is the Mercy of God, that this egregious Sinner obtained Mercy.

Hereupon the Apostle proceeds (as well he may) to magnify the transcendent Mercy and abundant Grace of God, which had abounded to flowing over, *Verse 14:* And the Grace of our Lord was *Exceeding Abundant*, with Faith and Love which is in Christ Jesus. There is a *Pleonasm* of Free Grace in other Scriptures, but here is a *Superpleonasm* *ὑπερπλεονασμὸς* ἢ *ὑπερ*, *Superabundavit Gratia*. Here is an Hyperbole upon an Hyperbole; and all little enough to set forth the Exuberancy and Superabundant Redundancy of Free Grace. There is *Height and Depth and Length and Breadth in the Love of God in Christ*, it *passeth Knowledge*.

The Text contains a most comfortable Revelation concerning the Redemption and Salvation of a lost World by our Lord Jesus Christ,

This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners; of whom I am chief. This Saying is the Sum of the Gospel.

In the Words here is observable,

1. A Proposition or Doctrine declared and laid down, *That Christ came into the World to save Sinners.* Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah: He is come into the World, and he is come upon a compassionate and saving Design, not to judge and condemn the World, but to Save it.

2. The Commendation of this Truth, as to what it is in it self; *It is a faithful Saying*: As to what it is and ought to be with respect to us, *Worthy of all Acceptation.* It is worthy of the Acceptation of all Persons, and it's worthy to be received and embraced with all sorts of Acceptation, with Faith, Love, and Affection, Gratitude and Praise.

3. Here is the Apostle's Sense, Apprehension and Application of it to himself: *Of whom I am chief.* The Relative Particle may refer either to the Saving or to the Sinners, and so the Meaning is either, 1. That, of this Truth and Doctrine of great Sinners being brought to Salvation, I am the great President, having been so great a Sinner as I have been, and yet being received to Mercy. Or, 2. Of which Sinners I was as great a one as any other, yea, the chiefest, *Primus quo nullus prior*, as some gloss upon it; *Imo quo nullus pejor*, as others. Notwithstanding his Repentance and Remission, still he reflected upon his former unregenerate State and Condition, as if he was worse than the worst. Thus it is with the true Penitent; tho' God has cast his Sins behind *his Back*, yet he has them always before his *own Face*, to keep him humble, sensible of, and thankful for the rich Grace of God, which display'd it self in his Conversion and Pardon.

The Words wou'd afford us Variety of Observations, and furnish out Matter for many Days Discourse, but that which I shall chiefly insist upon is the Glorious Design of the Lord Jesus Christ in Coming into the World, it was to Save Sinners, yea, the Chief of Sinners. In the Prosecution of this important and comfortable Subject, I shall

First,

First, Consider the Nature of this Salvation.

Secondly, I shall enquire how the Lord Jesus Christ did obtain it.

Thirdly, I shall take notice of the Subjects or the Persons that he came to Save.

Fourthly, I wou'd touch at the Commendation of this Truth and Doctrine, which is here given by the Apostle : It is worthy of all Acceptation.

First, I shall consider something of the Nature of this Salvation, which the Lord Jesus Christ came into the World to procure for, and bestow upon fallen Man. And we may consider it in the Privative and Positive Part of it.

1. Let's consider what it is that the Lord Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners from : In the general, He came to save them from all Evils, Enemies and Miseries. Particularly,

1. He came to save them from Sin. Sin is the worst and greatest of Evils, and to be saved from it is a considerable, yea, a Chief Part of this Salvation; *Mat. i. 21. Thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his People from their Sins.* His very Name signifies a Saviour, an Angel being the Expositor; and Sin is that Evil thing, from which he saves his People. We may assure our selves that he fully answers the Signification of his Name. This was prophecy'd of him by *Dan. 9. 24 Daniel*; The Messiah was to finish Transgression, and make an end of Sin : And this He did accomplish when *Heb. 9. 26.* he came into the World; for He appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself.

There are two things especially in Sin, which he came into the World to save Sinners from; The Guilt of Sin, and the Power of Sin.

1. *The Guilt of Sin*: Guilt is an Obligation to Punishment, or the binding over of the Sinner to the Execution of Wrath and Justice. Now Christ dissolves this Obligation, cancels this Bond, discharges this Debt; and all those who have a Part in this Saviour and in this purchased Salvation, tho' Sin may trouble them, yet it shall not condemn them; for *there Rom. 8. 1. is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* And who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? *ver. 33, 34.* It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is

even at the right hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us. All those that believe in him are justify'd from all things, and that finally too; for they shall never come into Condemnation. And then as for

2. *The Power of Sin*; This Lord Jesus came into the World to save his People from it also. This is the Dominion, Sovereignty and Command, which Sin exercises over all Men by Nature: Hence they are called *the Servants of Sin and Corruption*. Now the Lord Jesus Christ came into the World to take away the Lordship, and to break the Power and Empire of Sin, and so to save poor Sinners from its Dominion and Reign. He gave himself for us that he might *redeem us from all Iniquity*, and Sin shall not have Dominion over his People, for they are not under the Law, but under Grace. The Law of the Spirit and Life which is in Christ.

Rom. 6. 14. *Jesus has made them free from the Law of Sin and Death.*

Rom. 8. 2.

2. The Lord Jesus Christ came into the World to Save Sinners from Satan. The Devil had a double Power over the World, *Legal and Usurped*. The former he had as God's Executioner, by the Appointment and Ordination of God's Justice: The latter he had as the God of this World, the Prince that rules in the Children of Disobedience. Almighty God made him the *Executioner* of his just Wrath and Vengeance; but the wicked World made him a *Prince*, and set him up upon a Throne, and yielded Obedience and Allegiance to him. Now the Lord Jesus Christ came into the World, to save Sinners from this Enemy and Tyrant, the Devil.

1. He came to deliver us from that *Legal and Deputed Power*, which Satan had over us. Sinful Man had renounced his Creator and natural Lord, and was judicially given up to Satan, as the Executioner of Divine Displeasure. The Eternal Son of God comes into the Word, to satisfy the Law and Justice of God, and so Satan's Authority over them was to fall on course; as the Power of a Jaylor over a Prisoner, doth when the Law is satisfy'd, and he has a Legal Discharge. Why, so when God the Supreme Judge is satisfy'd, Satan loseth the Right and Power which he had to torment and punish: Hereby he is put out of Place and Office. Hence it is said that the Lord Jesus Christ *delivers us from the Powers of Darkness*, and by dying has

Col. 1. 13. *destroyed*

destroyed him which had the Power of Death, the Devil. Heb. 2. 14.
 Jesus Christ is stronger than the strong Man armed, he comes upon him, and spoils his Goods.

2. He came to save poor Sinners from that Power which Satan had Usurp'd; and here his Work is to rescue his People out of Satan's Snare, to pluck 'em out of his Hands, who by their own Default had put themselves under his Dominion and Tyranny. Hence it is said, that *He spoiled Principalities and Powers, and made a Shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it,* Col. 2. 15. that is, in the Cross. Now says He, *The Prince of this World is cast out.* John 12. 31. The Devil was very unwilling to let go his Prey. He is a strong and malicious Enemy: Every Rescue and Deliverance out of his Hands is the Effect of the Almighty Power of Christ. He came into the World to *destroy the Works of the Devil, to turn Men from Darkness to light, and from the Power of Satan unto God.* It is he that says to the Prisoners, *Go forth, and to them that sit in Darkness, Shew your selves.*

3. The Lord Jesus Christ came to save Sinners from the World; from the Evil things, and from the Good things of it, as they are accounted. The World was become our Enemy, and did assault us: We were endanger'd by its Smiles and Frowns, Temptations and Terrors, alluring Vanities, and affrighting Menaces. Now the Design of Jesus Christ in Coming into the World, was to save his People from these, as some of the great Hindrances of our Safety and Felicity. Hence it is said, *He gave himself for our Sins, that he might deliver us from this present Evil World, according to the Will of God and our Father.* Gal. 1. 4. The Design of his coming into the World was not only Expiation and Remission, but also a Redemption and Salvation from the Lusts and Corruptions, from the Dangers and Temptations of this present evil World: And one Part of our Salvation by the Redeemer, is a Deliverance from the corrupt Practices and Examples of the Men of the World. Hence Believers are said to be Redeemed from their *vain Conversation received by Tradition from their Fathers.* 1 Pet. 1. 18.

4. The Lord Jesus Christ came into the World to save us from the Wrath of God. God is angry with the Wicked every Day. By Nature we are all Children of Wrath, but this Jesus delivers us from the Wrath to 1 Thes. 1. 10
glory. There is a terrible and dreadful Wrath, which

doth await every wicked and impenitent Sinner. It is a Wrath *to come*, that will always be *coming*, after Thousands, yea Millions of Years that Sinners have lain under it, still it is and will be a *Wrath to come*; and miserable forlorn Wretches will then be as far from being deliver'd from it, as in the first Hour they fell under it: But Jesus Christ deliver'd up himself to Death, that he might be a Saviour and Deliverer to his People from this Wrath: So that when ever it breaks forth, (as it will do upon Multitudes) yet not a Drop of it shall ever fall upon any of them, whom Christ came into the World to Save. He has appeas'd Divine Wrath for them: By his Sufferings and Death He satisfy'd Justice, expiated Guilt, appeased Wrath, and so He secures his People from the Arrests of Justice and the Sword of Vengeance. He is the Propitiation, *that God might be just, and the Justifier of those that believe in Jesus.* It is this Jesus that has reconciled God and Man, render'd God Propitious and Gracious to all that have an Interest in this Salvation and the Purchaser of it; by and thro' whom God shews himself to be a God of Grace to all. God was in Christ *reconciling the Word unto himself*: He suffer'd that he might bring us to God: He is our Peace, who has made Peace by the Blood of his Cross.

5. The Lord Jesus Christ came into the World, to save Sinners from *the Law*; from the Burden of the Ceremonial, and from the Curse of the Moral Law.

1. He saves from the Burden of the Ceremonial Law, that Burden, which neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear. *Moses's Law*, with all its Sacrifices and Offerings, Ceremonies and Oblations, could nor make *the Comers thereunto perfect*; and therefore there is a Disanulling those Ceremonial Commandments, because of the Weakness and Unprofitableness of them. The Law had only a *Shadow of good things to come*, and the Shadows are vanish now the Substance is come.

2. He saves from the Curse and Malediction of the Moral Law: So that tho' Believers are obliged to obey its Commands, yet they are not under it as a Covenant for Justification; still we are under the Precepts and Conduct of it, as a Rule for Direction: But this blessed Redeemer came to save his People from the Curse and Penalty of it. He was made under the Law

to redeem those that were under the Law, and he delivers from the Curse of the Law. Gal. 4. 4. ch. 3. 13.

6. Consider it as a Salvation from *Death and Hell*: and this Blessed Jesus came to save poor Sinners from the Curse and Sting of a *Natural Death*, and from the Pains and Power of an *Eternal Death*.

1. He came into the World to save us from the *Curse and Sting of a Natural Death*: So that tho' it be not taken away, but still continues in the world as the Fruit of Sin, passing over all Men, because all have Sinned: Death being a visible Punishment, and Sensible, bitter Effect of the Fall and Sin here on Earth, and also as a Passage into our Eternal Condition, whether of Happiness or Misery: Yet it has lost its Sting and victorious Progress; so that it is not inflicted on Believers as on others, as the Consequent of a Spiritual, and the Introduction to Eternal Death: This is what the Apostle declares. *Forasmuch then as the Children are Partakers of Flesh and Blood, He also himself likewise took part of the same; that thro' Death he might destroy him that had the Power of Death, that is the Devil; and deliver them, who through fear of Death, were all their Life time Subject to bondage. Hence that Triumphant 'Εμνικιον, &c. Death is swallowed up in victory, O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? Thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Heb. 2. 14. 15. 1 Cor. 15. 54.

2. He saves from the *Pains and Power of Eternal Death*: This is called the *Second Death*, the *Worm that dies not*, and the *fire which shall not be quenched*: The Torments of *Hell* which are *Easeless, Endless and remediless*. Now Jesus Christ came to save his People from this dreadful and Intolerable Misery, so that now the Redeemed of the Lord shall not be hurt by the Second Death, Eternal Death shall not prey upon them; they shall not come into Condemnation. Blessed and Holy is he that hath part in the first Resurrection, on such the Second Death hath no Power, *Rev. 20. 6. Whosoever believeth in me, says our Saviour, εμὴ ζωὴν αἰῶνα, Shall not die for ever*, so it is in the Original, which our last Translators not unfirly read, *Shall never die*: i. e. not for ever, Faith construeth it, *never*. Though I die Temporally, yet Scripture calleth it a Sleep, rather than Death, if I do not die Eternally.

ternally. And this may suffice for the Privative Part of that Salvation which the Lord Jesus came into the World to procure, for poor perishing Sinners, or what it is which the Lord Jesus Christ saves them from.

2. I proceed to Consider the Positive Part of this Salvation, wherewith the Lord Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners: For as it includes in it a Redemption and Deliverance from all Evils and miseries, Sin, Satan, the World, the Wrath of God, the Curse of the Law, Death and Hell: So it includes and contains in it Positive Happiness and Felicity: *Grace* here and *Glory* hereafter.

1. *Grace in this World*, as the Pledge and Earnest of Eternal Glory in the other state and World: All Spiritual Graces and Divine Consolations, such as these, saving *Illumination*, Divine Light and Knowledge in things Spiritual: For this Blessed Jesus is come a Light into the World, He is the true Light, and he turns Men from Darkness to Light, and makes them Light in the Lord. *Sanctification*; hence he is called our *Sanctifier*, and he is made unto us of God, *Sanctification*; and he gave himself for his Church that he might *Sanctify* and cleanse it, with the *Washing of Water by the Word*, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be *holy and without blemish*, *Pardon of Sin and Justification* of our Persons: He is a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance and Remission of Sins, and we are said to have Redemption through his blood the forgiveness of Sins; so that now (since Jesus Christ is come into the world to save Sinners) God can be *just* and the *Justifier* of them that believe in Jesus. I might here instance further in *Reconciliation* to God, *Adoption*, *Progressive Sanctification*, Growth and Increase in every Grace of thy Holy Spirit: *Right* to, and Interest in all the *Promises*, all our *Consolation* and Comfort, *Hopes* of Salvation and *Perseverance* in Grace unto the end. But Consider we this Salvation as it is in the other World, and so it includes in it.

2. *Heaven and Glory*, That Happiness and Felicity which the Saints shall enjoy in the Kingdom above, when they shall leave this Present State and World here below. While the Saints are here on Earth they have

have Salvation in the bud and blossom, they are in the Suburbs of Heaven, and are made to sit together in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus : But when they come to Heaven, Salvation will be perfect and compleat. Jesus Christ came into the World that he might prepare his Chosen for Heaven, and that he might place them there in his own good time, where is the Compleating, Crowning part of this Salvation. This is the Record, that God hath given unto us Eternal Life, *1 John 5. 11.* and this Life is in his Son, Hence Believers are said to be Redeemed to an *Inheritance Incorruptible, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for them ;* and Jesus *1 Pet. 1. 4.* Christ is said to be the *Author of Eternal Salvation* unto all them that obey him. This includes a Perfect Exemption and Freedom from all Evils and Miseries, and the Possession and Fruition of all Good and Happiness. *Heb. 5. 2.* While here on Earth the Saints of God are freed from the Guilt of Sin by Justification, and from the Enslaving Power and Pollution of it by Sanctification : But there his Redeemed ones shall be Perfectly and Eternally freed from all Sin and Corruption, from Satan and all his Temptations, from inward Trouble and outward Affliction, from Death and all the Frightful Antecedents and Penal Consequences of it ; and then and there, they shall be made happy in the Facial Vision and Beatifical Fruition of the Blessed and Glorious God, the Tri-Une Elohim, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and that to Eternal Ages. They shall be for ever in the Agreeable and Delightful Society of Glorious Angels and Fellow Saints, the Spirits of Just Men made Perfect. They shall be put into the Possession and Fruition of all the Glories and Felicities of the Heavenly Kingdom. Knowledge, Holiness, Glory and Joy will all be in their purest Brightness and highest Perfection, and all this will be Eternal, But this Salvation is a happiness so Transcendent and Incomparable, so Incomprehensible and Unconceivable, that *Eye has not seen, Ear has not heard neither has it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive fully of it.* *1 Cor. 2. 9.*

I therefore Proceed in the Second Place to enquire, How did the Lord Jesus Christ obtain and Procure this Salvation for Sinners. Now he did this partly by Price, and partly by Power.

1. *By Price*: The Blood of Jesus Christ Purchased poor Sinners out of the Hands of Justice, by satisfying the Law for them. Justice must have a Sacrifice, and the Law a Satisfaction; without shedding of blood, there was no Redemption, and the blood of Bulls and of Goats could not take away Sin; But Jesus Christ by his suffering and Death has made satisfaction to Divine Justice, purchased Remission of Sins, reconciled Sinners unto God, bought them and Salvation for them, Hence it is said, *we are not our own, we are bought with a Price*, and what this Price is another Apostle tells us, *for we were not redeemed with Corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, but with the Precious Blood of the Son of God*, and elsewhere. God is said to have redeemed the Church with his own Blood. It was by his own Blood that this Blessed Jesus entered into the Holy Place, having obtained Eternal Redemption for us; hence Heaven is called the *Purchased Possession*. Grace is his Purchase, and Glory is his Purchase: Pardon and Peace, Holiness and Happiness are all his Purchase, and all by his Blood. In Eternity, the Saints of God will admire but never fully comprehend this great Mystery, that the Eternal Son of God should come down into the World to merit Salvation, by his suffering and Death for poor Sinners. O what manner of Love is this! so has God loved the World.

2. *By Power*: Thus he saves Sinners from Sin, Death, Satan and the World. As he doth something *for us*, so he doth something *in us*: *For us*, he prevails by the Merit of his Death; but all his work is not done on the Cross: and therefore *in us* he prevails by the Power of his Grace and the Efficacy of his Holy Spirit. Sin, the World and the Devil, are the three grand Enemies of our Souls, these Assault us many ways and are great Hinderances of our Salvation: These Jesus Christ overcomes by his Power, Satan is a strong and malicious Enemy, and he is exceeding unwilling to let go his Prey; but the Lord Jesus Christ is stronger than the strong Man armed. The Lyon of the Tribe of Judah is too strong for the Roaring Lyon: and every rescue and Deliverance from the Powers of Darkness, is a glorious Effect of the Almighty Power of Christ. By his Death he merited Salvation for his

1Thes 9. 5. People, hence they are said to be sav'd by his Death.

By

Thirdly, I proceed to consider the Subjects, the Persons for whom the Lord Jesus Christ came into the World, whom he came to save; Sinners, says the Apostle in the Text, of whom I am chief. They were not innocent Creatures, nor of the highest Order and Excellency, for he took not on him the Nature of Angels. But it is fallen sin-*Heb. 2. 16.* ful Man, that he came into the World to redeem and save; the lapsed lost race of Adam, who were covered over with Pollution and Deformity: When no Eye pitied them, and they had no Heart to pity themselves; then the Eternal Jehovah cast a Propitious Glance towards them, the Eternal Son of God loved them, and gave himself for them. This is a Wonder of his Goodness and Love indeed, that he should come to save such vile, despicable and deformed Creatures, that were indigent and impotent.

It was not only Sinners, but Enemies that Jesus Christ came into the World to save, such as were in a State of Enmity against him; herein God commended his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for *Rom. 5. 8.* But as if that had not been sufficient to display the Greenness and Riches of his Grace, he adds, That when we were Enemies we were reconciled by the Death of his Son, and again, *Ye that were sometimes alienated and Enemies in your minds by wicked Works, has he now reconciled.* *ver. 10. Col. 1. 21.*

It was some of the worst and vilest of Sinners that Christ came into the World to save: For tho' every Sin be great absolutely consider'd, as committed against an infinite God; yet comparatively some are greater than others, and so some Sinners are greater than others. Paul here accounts himself a Sinner of the first Rate; his Sins were of an heinous Nature, of a bloody Colour, and of a crimson Dye; and yet, says he, I obtained Mercy, *v. 13.* and he adds, *v. 16.* For this cause I obtained Mercy, that some first Jesus Christ might shew forth all Long-suffering; as a Pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him Life Everlasting. This memorable Instance of his gracious Entertainment with Christ is recorded for the support and quickning of other Sinners in the way to Christ. Paul is here set up, upon Record, to shew what God of Mercy and Pardon, and what a Saviour of compassion and Bowels, can and will do: Here's an eminent President, *exemplum*, an Encouraging Pattern to poor Sinners to the End of the World, to look unto

this Saviour that they may be saved. We have also other Instances, as of *Manasseh*, *Mary Magdalen*, and many more great and profligate Sinners; and it's remarkable, that when the Apostle had given us a black Roll of gross and abominable Sins and Sinners, he immediately sub-
 1 Cor. 6. 11. joins, *Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctify'd, but ye are justify'd in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* Sometimes God picks out such Sinners, on purpose to illustrate the Glory of his Grace in and upon them, that they to whom much is forgiven may love much. I add, That such as receive Benefit by the Undertaking, Suffering and Death of the Lord Jesus Christ, have very low, humble and abasing Thoughts of themselves. Tho' this Apostle had truly repented, and was pardoned, and was now an Eminent Professour and Preacher of the Gospel, yet he cannot but look upon his former Sins with Detestation, and upon himself with Humiliation and Self-abhorrence, because of them. Elsewhere he calls himself the *least of all Saints*, and here the *chief of Sinners*. Well then may we say that the Lord Jesus Christ came into the World, to save some of the worst of Sinners; such as are so in Reality and in their own Sense and Apprehension of it also.

Fourthly, I shall touch briefly at the Commendation of this Truth which is here given by the Apostle: It is a Faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation.

It is a Faithful Saying: This appears from the concurrent Testimony of Scripture, which, as with one Voice declares, That this was the proper Intent, and principal Design of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Errand which he came into the World upon, to redeem and recover poor miserable, perishing Creatures, out of their lost and undone Condition, and to bring 'em to a salveable State. *The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.*
 Luke 19. 10. The Son of Man is not come to destroy Men's Lives, but to save them. God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life: For God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the World; but that the World thro' him should be saved.
 Ch. 9. v. 56
 John 3. 16, 17.

It is worthy of all Acceptation: All should receive and embrace it, and that with all manner of Acceptation, with Faith, Love, Thankfulness, Delight and Joy, and should be faithfully improved by all that receive it.

To Evidence this, Consider we, *Our great Need* of such a Saviour and such a saying as this: The whole need not the Physician but they that are sick. The whole World was a great Hospital, all wounded, mortally wounded, Bleeding and Dying, in a lost, undone, Perishing State, Consider also the *Nature and Properties of this Salvation*, It is a great Salvation; so great that there is none like it, none to Compare with it. It is great Absolutely, and great Comparatively: All other Salvations and Deliverances that our Eyes have seen, or our Ears heard of, have been Inconsiderable, if Compared with it. Heb. 2. 3.

It is great as it is a Salvation from the greatest Evils, the worst of Enemies and the Depths of Misery: Sin, Satan, the World, the Wrath of God, Curse of the Law, Sting of Death and Torments of Hell.

It is a *Perfect Salvation*: Jesus Christ is a Perfect, Sufficient Saviour, called a Horn of Salvation, which denotes a Mighty, full and Powerful Saviour. He is *Mighty* to save: *Able* to save to the *Uttermost*, from all and every Evil and Enemy, and that fully.

It is *most Suitable*: Jesus Christ is replenisht with all that's needful, to answer the wants and wishes of poor lost Sinners: all that the Justice of God requires for satisfaction, and the necessity of Guilty Souls for their supply and Salvation. *In him all fulness dwells*, and his People are *Compleat in him*.

It is a Salvation, that's *Permanent and Perpetual*: He is become the Author of *Eternal Salvation*, not for a few days or years, but to the Ages of Eternity, He saves not only for a time but for ever, They that believe in him shall not Perish but have Everlasting Life.

Consider we further *by whom* it was wrought and brought about: Consider here, Who he is, The Eternal Son of God, the onely Saviour of the World: The Eternal Son of God, the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the Express Image of his Person, whose Name is Wonderful, the Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace: He is the only Saviour, there is Salvation in no other, If we refuse him, and neglect this saying and this Salvation, we perish unavoidably and that for ever, for there remains no more Sacrifice for sin. Consider *whence he came*: He came from Heaven, the Habitation of his Glory, and Oh, what Unconceivable and ineffable Glory did he leave to come and die for Sinners: He came from

from his Father, yea from the Sweetest and most delightful Embraces of his Fathers Bosom. And *whither did he come*: To this Earth and World: This World that lyes in Wickedness: This Earth, where Satan has his Walk and Circuit, and where Iniquity Abounds: Consider withal *how he came*: Not with the Majesty and Glory of a God, Nor with the Splendour and Royalty of a Earthly Monarch; but scarce as a Man, in the Form of a Servant, yea in the likeness of Sinful Flesh: And in this Disguise he submitted to and suffered a most Painful, Shameful and Accursed Death, the Death of the Cross; and all to bring about the Redemption and salvation of poor lost Sinners.

I shall make a brief Application of the whole in a few Reflections.

It is such an Excellent and Valuable saying that the Lord Jesus Christ came into the World upon a saving Design, to save Sinners, yea the Chief of Sinners: Hence.

1. See what an unspeakable Mercy it is, that this is *made known unto us*. We have the glad Tydings of Salvation sounding in our Ears; our Eyes see the Days of the Son of Man, our Ears hear the Joyful Sound, This is the Comfortable News which the Gospel brings, that unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given. The holy Scripture discovers to us the Way of Salvation, who our Saviour is, what he hath done and suffer'd for us, and what is requir'd of us in order to be eternally happy. He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good: These things are Written and Preached unto you, that you might believe *that Jesus is the Son of God, and that believing ye might have Life thro' his Name*. Life and Immortality is brought to Light by the Gospel; to you the Word of this Salvation is sent, and these things are spoken unto you, that ye might be sav'd.

John 20. 31

2. Let's be much and often in the Contemplation and Admiration of that matchless boundless Love, which has here display'd it self. Herein the Kindness and Love of God towards Man has appear'd: An Astonishing Act and Manifestation of Love it was in God the Father, to give his own, only, dearly beloved Son, to be incarnate, to suffer and die for our Salvation; and Adorable is the Love and Condescension of the Lord Jesus Christ, that he should come down from Heaven, live a Life of

Sor-

Sorrows, and die a Death of Pain ; that such Sinners, Enemies, and Rebels as we, might escape everlasting Destruction, and obtain eternal Salvation by him. Oh, what manner of Love is this ! Herein he commended his Love. *As the Father loved him, so he hath loved his People.* Oh, behold him in the Strength of his Love ! *Joh. 17. 12.* breaking thro' the Curse of the Law, the Wrath of God, and the Agonies of Death, to bring home the blessed Fruits of his Eternal Love unto your Souls ; live and die in the Admiration of this Love.

3. Let us all be prevailed with *to receive this Saying and this Saviour* : There is Salvation in Jesus Christ for lost Souls, but in none other : He is God's Salvation : There is a sufficiency of saving Power, Merit and Grace in him : He came into the World upon a saving Errand and Design. Let none then, no not the Chief of Sinners sit down in Despondency and Desperation, or remain in their unbelief and Impenitency. It's pity that any should perish under the Gospel, since Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners : and the Excellent Acceptable Doctrine is declared. How can such appear before him at his Second Coming, when he shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in Flaming Fire, taking Vengeance of them that know him not and obey not his Gospel ? This is the Condemnation that Light is come into the World : There's none like it, none to compare with it. The Wrath of the Lamb will be Insupportable. It will be more Tolerable for Heathen Nations than for such as Neglect this great Salvation.

Be Persuaded then to believe this saying, and receive this Saviour, for He and it is Worthy of all Acceptation. It is the work and Office of Faith to Realize this as a Matter of greatest Certainty and clearest Evidence ; To Embrace and Improve it, as what is of unspeakable Worth and Transcendent Excellency, O receive it with Love and Affection, Thankfulness and Joy.

4. Let none *Expect* Salvation by him but upon Gospel Terms : Though he came to save the Chief of Sinners, yet this Design was not to save them *in* their Sins, but *from* their Sins, Impenitent Unbelieving Souls must have no share in this Salvation : *Salvation is far from the Wicked* : Our own Duties and Performances, Righteousness and good Works are insufficient to be our Saviours.

Well

Well then, Renounce and Abandon Sin, the World and the Devil; Deny Self, Natural, Sinful, Moral and Religious: Receive a whole Christ as Lord and Saviour Devote your whole selves unto him: He saves none but in the Way of Repentance, Faith and new Obedience: He is become the Author of Eternal Salvation, but it's to them that obey him. It's the great Design of the Blessed Gospel to bring Souls to this Saviour and to this Salvation, and this is our Work who Preach the Gospel, and this was the Desire and Design (no doubt) of our Worthy Friend and Dear Brother Deceased, to have (not himself) but this Saviour and Salvation commended and recommended.

Were I not restrained by his Express Prohibition, I might say much and truly concerning him: But though I must be silent, yet being Dead he yet speaketh and his own works praise him in the Gates.

He was well known amongst you, and you may say (though I may not) that he was, a Serious, Solid, Eminent and Exemplary Christian, an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no Guile; one that feared God above many: that feared him greatly, that feared him from his youth; for his Piety was of an Early Date; and you may say that he continued Constant and Uniform in his Respects to all the Commands of God, following the Lord fully, in all Places, at all times and in all Conditions of Life, being faithful unto Death, his Gray Hairs being a Crown of Glory, because he was found in the way of Righteousness.

You may say that his Humility was Remarkable and Imitable, that he had always, low thoughts of himself, as if he had been the Chief of Sinners and the least of Saints, though he had not onely Escaped the gross Pollutions of the World, but his Grace and Holiness was above the common Size of ordinary Attainments.

You may say that his Charity was Extensive and Universal, not confined to petty Names and Distinctions, nor limited to the narrow Interest of a Party, but that he had a true love to all who had any thing of God appearing in them, though they might differ from him and one another; and as ready and willing he was to do all good Offices to their Souls and Bodies, by Instruction, Admonition, Reproof, Counsel, Quickning and Comfort; as also by Acts of Bounty and Liberality for the Re-

Relief of the Neceſſitous, and in order to attract 'em unto and Encourage 'em in the ways of God.

You may alſo ſay that his Zeal for God and his Glory was very great and Conſpicuous : Many both Miniſters and Private Chriſtians can Witneſs how free and Generous he was for Promoting the Intereſt of Religion, both in this Place and elſewhere, and that without the leaſt ſhew of Oſtentation, his Left-hand not knowing what his Right-hand did.

Very remarkable, you'll ſay, was his Love to God's Worſhip and Ordinances : For Tender-heartedneſs and Affectionate Meltings under Ordinances and Providences, I have ſcarce ever known any to compare with him, nor perhaps you neither.

You may further ſay, what a great and Compaſſionate Concern he had upon his Heart and Spirit, for the good of his Dear Children and other Relations : That his Hearts Deſire and Prayer to God for them was that they might be ſaved : And how often did he Engage the Prayers of others, Miniſters and Chriſtian Friends for 'em.

Many of you will bear witneſs for him, how ſtrict and Careful he was to keep a good Conſcience, not only towards God, but to have a Conſcience void of offence towards Men, ſuch as were concerned with him as a Trades-Man, as a Land-Lord, as a Maſter to his Servants, I doubt not will be ready upon this Occaſion, to own and acknowledge his Punctualneſs and fair Dealing, his Conſcientiouſneſs, Juſtice and Righteouſneſs in the Management of his Secular Affairs : How much he was afraid of doing the leaſt Wrong to any, whether Chapmen, Tenants or Servants, and how exact he was in obſerving that Golden Rule of doing to others as he would be done unto.

And how Exemplary was his Patience, Submission and Reſignation to the will of God, under his laſt tedious and ling'ring Affliction ? Though his Pains were acute and ſharp, and of long Continuance, yet how far was he from the leaſt Murmuring againſt his Heavenly Father, or Impatience under his Hand ? and how ready was he upon all Occaſions to ſpeak well of God, and to juſtify him in the moſt Terrible Appearances, even when he groaned under the Severity of his Diſcipline, whoſe Judgments are unſearchable, and whoſe Providential Ways are paſt our fathoming or finding out. You

You of his Family have lost a Governour, a Father a Master, who gave you good Instructions, who put up earnest and importunate Prayers to God for you, and who set you an Example of Moral Vertues, Christian Graces, and Gospel Duties: O Let 'em not be all in vain!

You of this Congregation and Town, have lost a Friend; a Neighbour, a Christian, that was Excellent and useful: And some of us in the Ministry have lost a Patron, a Benefactor, who encouraged and strengthened our Hearts and Hands in the Work of God: Thus you and we may Condole what I must not commend. Let's all imitate him in his Excellencies, Faith, Hope, Zeal for God and his Honour, Heavenly-mindedness, Humility, Love to God, his Ordinances, his ways and his People, Justice and Righteousness in our Dealings, Charity and usefulness in our Places, according to our Ability and as we have opportunity. The Holy Scripture contains the Doctrines of Christianity and the Rules of Holiness, The Lives of Eminent Saints present us with a Pattern and Example Worthy our Commendation and Imitation. O what a great and real Difference doth the grace of God make between a true Christian and the Carnal unbelieving World: much of this is visible while here on Earth in this State of Imperfection, but the day is coming when the Lord will shew who are his and who are Holy: Then a Man (any Man) may discern between the Righteous and the Wicked, between them who have feared and served God, and those who have not.

Many of our best Friends have taken their leave of this Earth and World: Our Fathers where are they? Let's resolve to have Communion with them, though they are departed, by Contemplating *what they are*, what they *do* and what they *Possess*. Let's desire and Endeavour to follow them as they followed Christ, yea to be as like them as we can, by imitating their Temper and Work above, in the Love of God and the delightful thankful Praises of the Redeemer, this blessed Jesus who came into the World to save Sinners, yea the Chief of Sinners. I shall shut up all with that Advice of the Apostle. *And we desire that every one of you do shew the same Diligence, to the full Assurance of Hope unto the End.* Heb. 6. 11. *That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.*

FINIS.